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SUBJECT: POLAND TO ATTEND PARIS DONORS CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 163955

¶1. (SBU) PolCouns met December 10 with Wieslaw Kucel, Counselor in the MFA's Middle East and Africa Department to deliver reftel demarche. Kucel, who accompanied Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski to the Annapolis conference, said that Poland would be represented by at least Deputy Foreign Minister Ryszard Schnepf, and possibly by Minister Sikorski.

¶2. (SBU) Regarding assistance, Kucel said that Poland now provides nearly \$1 million in development assistance to the Palestinians, mostly via NGO's. The MFA would like to do more, and hopes to double that figure in the coming year. Poland's representative to the Paris conference should be able, Kucel said, to announce the figure at the time of the conference. Kucel did not think Poland had the mechanisms for providing direct budgetary support, but he undertook to pass along our message urging cash support. Poland will, he said, also support EU efforts and increased contributions to the Palestinian budget.

¶3. (SBU) Kucel said that Poland had some long-standing training and scholarship programs, under which about 42 Palestinian students were studying in Poland, most of them in medical fields. This year Poland had started a program under which Palestinian and Israeli teachers were brought to Poland for training in tolerance education, looking at programs Poland has that address its own efforts to build better ties and build tolerance between Poles and its neighbors, Germany and Ukraine, with whom Poland has had such a difficult history. He noted that this program had been run out of the presidency, but that, with the change of government, might shift to the Ministry of Education. The MFA wants to enlarge this program to include assistance in developing a tolerance curriculum, and expand it to include media and business.

¶4. (SBU) Kucel undertook to inform us if the Minister should make the decision to attend. PolCouns stressed Secretary Rice will head our delegation and that we hope for

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representation at the most senior level.
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